PROJECT SCHEDULE

Public availability of the Environmental Assessment document is expected in Early 2006, when another Public Information Meeting for the project will be held. Following that meeting, FHWA will prepare a Decision Document. If FHWA recommends a build alternative, it is expected that right-of-way acquisition, permits, and design could take one to two years. Construction could take another two years. In summary, absent unforeseen circumstances, the facility could be open in late 2009.

AGENCY/GROUP STAKEHOLDERS

- Federal Highway Administration
- US Army Garrison Fort Belvoir, Directorate of Public Works (DPW)
- U.S. Army Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, Defense Access Road Program
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Humphreys Engineering Center Support Activity
- Fairfax County Department of Transportation
- Virginia Department of Transportation
- Citizens Task Force

CONTACTS

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VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE

http://www.efl.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/active_projects_rhtrc.htm

NOTES

Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division
US Department of Transportation - Federal Highway Administration

Richmond Highway – Telegraph Road Connector Environmental Assessment
Richmond Highway (U.S. Route 1) - Telegraph Road (VA Route 611)
Fairfax County, VA

Public Information Meeting

Monday, October 24, 2005
South County Government Center
8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA
6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.

MEETING PURPOSE

- Allow the public, in an open forum, to review alternative ways for Fort Belvoir to replace access previously provided by Beulah Street and Woodlawn Road prior to 9/11/01.
- Allow an exchange of information among the public, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) representatives, and key project agency stakeholders.
- Provide update on project activities since the February 2005 Public Meeting.

PROJECT PURPOSE

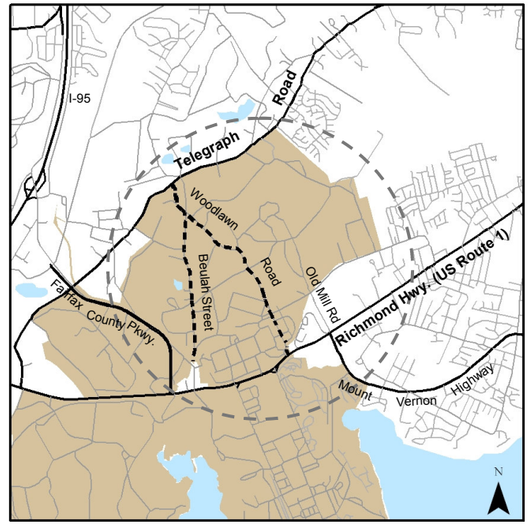
The purpose for the project, in the simplest terms, is to replace the once-public access provided by VA Route 618 (Woodlawn Road) and VA Route 613 (Beulah Street) between Richmond Highway and Telegraph Road (VA Route 611). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division, is the lead Federal agency for this EA. FHWA is working closely with DoD, VDOT and Fairfax County to complete this study.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) has enhanced security precautions at Fort Belvoir situated in southeastern Fairfax County. In 2001, between Telegraph Road and U.S. Route 1, Fort Belvoir closed both Woodlawn Road (VA Route 618) and Beulah Street (VA Route 613) to the general public. Commuters and residents without DoD decals can no longer utilize the connections provided by the roads.

This study for the Richmond Highway-Telegraph Road Connector Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluates several alternatives to replace public access restricted by the closing of Woodlawn Road and Beulah Street within the Fort.

PROJECT STUDY AREA



WELCOME & Please share your comments !

√ Project Representatives are available tonight
√ Fill out the "Comment Sheet"
√ Add your name to the project's Mailing List

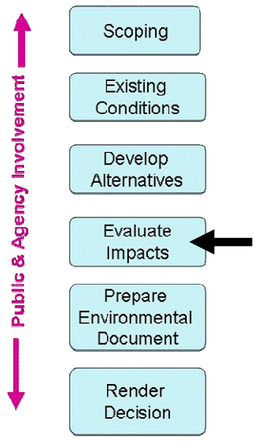
This handout provides complementary information to tonight's meeting. It explains the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process (which guides the current study), provides a summary of project activities since the last public meeting, as well as a project schedule, contacts, and other sources for information on the project.

NEPA PROCESS

This environmental study is being undertaken in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, and applicable Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations. NEPA requires the examination of potential impacts to the social and natural environment and an evaluation of alternatives when considering approval of proposed federal actions, which in this case could be a replacement roadway. Measures necessary to mitigate adverse impacts will be incorporated into the study. Public participation is also a component of the study.

The FHWA will use the EA document to make a decision on how to proceed with this connector road project. Without pre-determining the result of this study, FHWA has the benefit of the earlier US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) *Feasibility Study* and its data and methodology applied to evaluate potential connector road alternatives. A study area has been defined by the FHWA in which alternative solutions will be considered.

The graphic below illustrates steps in the NEPA process. The Project Team is currently at the step of evaluating the potential impacts of the connector road:



NEPA regulations can be found at 40 CFR 1500 et. seq. Other relevant regulations and procedures for preparing environmental documents, other applicable laws, Executive Orders, and regulations are also being followed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The February 2005 Public Information Meeting solicited a range of public comment from meeting participants. Through a written survey and feedback received directly at the meeting, the Project Team compiled the comments, and broadly grouped the comments into categories:

- Study process
- Route 235 (Mount Vernon Memorial Highway)
- Concerns about historic and cultural resources
- Concerns about security
- Connector road alternative preferences
- Provision of amenities, i.e. bicycle paths
- Traffic Issues

CITIZENS TASK FORCE

County Supervisors Gerry Hyland and Dana Kauffman created a Citizen's Task Force for the project after the first public meeting in February. The Task Force is made up of eight residents from the two affected planning districts. Project Team representatives and the Task Force have held two meetings for briefing on project activities including options for the Route 1/Old Mill Road/Mount Vernon Highway intersection, traffic studies, and other coordination efforts.

TRAFFIC DATA

Traffic forecasts have been prepared for Year 2010 and 2030 traffic at intersections and roads near to the study area. The forecast estimates future traffic with and without the construction of a Connector Road. Technical assumptions for the forecasts include:

- Use of the latest regional travel demand forecasting model by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG)
- Land use assumptions as defined in the Fort Belvoir (Draft) Master Plan as of April 2005
- Traffic associated with the future National Museum of the U.S. Army
- Does not include Base Closure and Realignment Commission's (BRAC) recommendations
- Planned transportation improvements from the region's approved *Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan*

For peak commuting hours, the analysis predicts changes in delay or "Level of Service" (LOS) at key intersections.

OTHER PROJECT COORDINATION

FHWA is coordinating with others on several proposed and active projects in the study area, including:

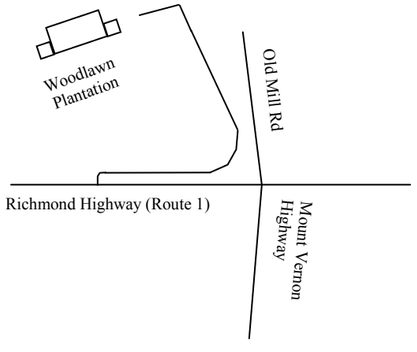
- National Museum of the U.S. Army
- Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail
- U.S. Route 1 safety improvements
- Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)
- Telegraph Road Improvements
- Fort Belvoir Master Plan

INTERSECTION OPTIONS

The Project Team is evaluating options for the Richmond Highway/Old Mill Road/Mount Vernon Highway intersections. The intersection is expected to be the southern terminus of the Connector Road. These options are being explored with a possible Woodlawn Plantation Entrance realignment. Aligning Old Mill Road and Mount Vernon Highway is being considered to improve safety and achieve better traffic operations. Issues still being evaluated for the Connector Road include lane configurations, road and median widths, and bicycle and pedestrian access. Figure 1 provides a sketch of one possible option for the intersection.

Without any changes or construction, the Richmond Highway/Old Mill Road/Mount Vernon Highway intersection is forecast to operate at a LOS "F" by 2010. Traffic operations at intersections are categorized A through F, with F being the worst category as a measure of delay at an intersection.

Figure 1. Intersection Option



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

SECTION 106 PROCESS

This project is subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. This section of the law requires a sponsoring federal agency (FHWA) to "take into account the effect of [an] undertaking on any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register [of Historic Places]." The lead federal agency must consult with interested parties, including the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), to determine the nature of these possible adverse effects and any action to resolve them. In addition, FHWA must also confer with local government agencies, organizations and other interested parties.

FHWA has determined that a number of known historic properties may be affected by the proposed project. These include Woodlawn Plantation (a National Historic Landmark), the Woodlawn Historic District (eligible for listing in the NRHP), and Pope-Leighey House (listed in the NRHP). In addition, known and potentially significant archaeological sites may be affected by the proposed project. Finally, FHWA is taking steps to identify historic properties in areas not previously inventoried for cultural resources.

Once the full nature of the project effects to historic properties is determined, FHWA will work with the DHR and the interested parties to develop strategies to avoid a property, minimize project impacts to a property, or mitigate adverse effects on the property. These strategies will be incorporated into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that will guide FHWA through the balance of the Section 106 compliance process. The agreed-upon strategies will be carried out under the terms of the MOA before or during project implementation.

FIELD WORK

Since the February public meeting, the project team has undertaken a variety of field work efforts. This work has involved the collection of environmental, cultural resource and topographic data in the study area including:

- Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat
- Phase I Archeological Assessment
- Topographic Survey work
- Site Reconnaissance
- Noise Data
- Intersection Layout